



News Release

For Immediate Release:
Wednesday, March 10, 2010

Media Contact:
Cyndi Bemis
Public Information Specialist
801-538-6348 (m) 801-865-0648

UDOH Receives Grant to Improve Health Info Exchange

(Salt Lake City, UT) - Utah will use a new \$6.3M grant to build capacity for exchanging health information through an interoperable statewide network. The funds are part of the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The Utah Department of Health (UDOH) and Utah Health Information Network (UHIN) will work together, with participation from a majority of health care providers and systems in Utah, to facilitate the sharing of medical information to improve patient treatment and care.

“It’s exciting to see our state grow and continue to break new ground in understanding health information technology and its power to transform care,” said Dr. David Sundwall, UDOH Executive Director and State Health Information Technology (HIT) Coordinator. “Health information technology is an essential component of our state’s overall health reform efforts, and a valuable tool that will help us achieve our vision, which is “Utah is a place where all people can enjoy the best health possible, where all can live, grow and prosper in clean and safe communities.”

“What makes Utah unique is the community commitment to do the right thing to improve care in Utah,” said Jan Root, Ph.D, CEO and President of UHIN. “Making information available at the point of care, regardless of where the patient seeks care in Utah, will improve the quality of that care,” she added. “UHIN believes the clinical health information exchange (cHIE) will bring cost savings and quality improvement, while also improving the privacy and the security of health information.”

“Simply put, health information exchange means a patient doesn’t have to carry medical records from one provider to another,” said Mathew Airmet, Consumer Representative of the UHIN Board. “For example, with a patient’s permission, a doctor at one facility can

look up his or her history with other providers securely and electronically for a more complete picture of that patient's health."

Utah will receive the ARRA grant funds over a period of four years, from 2010 through 2013.

UWIN has been in operation since 1993. It is a non-profit, broad-based coalition of Utah health care insurers, providers, and other interested parties, including state government, that is committed to reducing cost and improving the quality of care for Utah citizens through clinical health information exchange.

#

The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.